

Post Scripts

Black Humor... New CIA Chief? Quick Switch... New Opinion

These footnotes to the week's news have been gathered by reporters of The Washington Post:

Supreme Court Justice Hugo L. Black celebrated his 75th birthday last Monday by reading two blistering dissents against the views of his brother justices on congressional investigating power.

Twenty minutes after he finished those two but while the atmosphere of the courtroom was still tense, he took off on a long and humorous opinion about patents on automobile convertible tops.

Poking fun at the Court and at the patent itself, Black wondered if there really was anything new in the convertible top which had so deeply occupied the Court.

"In fact," he said, "the patentee must have known all about the old-fashioned surrey with the fringe on top and with isinglass curtains you could roll right down in case of a change in the weather."

He failed to cite Rogers and Hammerstein, who wrote those words, and the music, for "Oklahoma!" Somebody wondered if the Justice could be sued for infringing a copyright.

Finally, after many snickers had broken the decorum, Justice Black suggested that while he wasn't sure this particular convertible top had a fringe on top, he wondered that, if it did, was that an infringement?

When he finished, Justice John Marshall Harlan remarked dryly, "With all respect to the entertaining account of this issue by my

brother Black, it has nothing to do with this case."

Sen. A. Willis Robertson (D-Va.), chairman of the Senate Banking Committee, supported John F. Kennedy in the campaign, but is no New Frontiersman.

The other day Robertson was lighting into one of the New Frontier measures when Sen. Paul Douglas (D-Ill.) walked into the hearing room, while TV cameras were grinding.

He noticed with a shocked look that the name plate, "Sen. Douglas," appeared in front of Robertson, while Robertson's name decked the desk at which Douglas was sitting.

Quickly, he reached over and retrieved the Douglas marker from Robertson's desk, and replaced it with the appropriate plate.

"I just wanted the sign to fit the speaker," he explained.

If the Food and Drug Administration doesn't mind, its new boss, Secretary of Health, Education and Welfare Abraham Ribicoff, has some words to eat.

The Saturday Evening Post quoted him as saying in a 1952 article on "The Candid Congressman from Connecticut":

"There are lots of nice people in Washington, but it is primarily a phony city.

Anyone who tries to make the rounds socially had better give up as a working Congressman."

The article also reported that Ribicoff took a dim view of press releases, a major product of HEW.

"If a reporter wants to know something, he can ask and I can answer," Ribicoff said—in 1952.

There's talk about town that Telford Taylor may be the successor to Allen W. Dulles as head of the Central Intelligence Agency. It is expected that Dulles, who will be 68 next month, will retire some months hence after the CIA has moved into and settled down in its new Virginia headquarters.

Taylor, 53, is well known for his role as one of the chief attorneys for the United States in the Nuremberg war criminal trials of 1945-46. He served during the war as an Army military intelligence officer in Europe.